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JUL 20 2006

REMARKS

Claims 1-12, 14-16, 18-32, 34-36, 38, 41 and 42 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 14, 15, 18, 32, 34, 36, 38, 41 and 42 have been amended as shown at pages 2-8 of the Reply. In addition, claims 13, 17, 33, 37, 39, and 40 have been cancelled herein.

Applicants' representative appreciates the Examiner's acknowledgement that claims 17, 25, 31, and 37 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Independent claims 1 and 38 have been amended to include the allowable limitations of claim 17 and their supporting basis from intervening claims 13 and 15. Independent claim 32 has been amended to include the allowable limitations of claim 37 and their supporting basis from intervening claims 33, 34 and 36. Furthermore, claims 3, 4, 41, and 42 have been amended and claims 39 and 40 have been cancelled to address the 35 U.S.C. §101 and 35 U.S.C. §112 rejections as discussed below. It is noted that applicants' representative does not agree with the rejections of the originally filed claims based on the cited art of record and therefore will pursue such claims in a continuation application.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 39 and 40 Under 35 U.S.C. §101

Claims 39 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims 39 and 40 have been cancelled. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

II. Rejection of Claims 3, 4, and 40 Under 35 U.S.C §112

Claims 3, 4, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The Examiner indicated the claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to remove the claim language that provides the basis for this rejection. Claim 40 has been cancelled. Therefore, this rejection should be

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withdrawn.

III. Rejection of Claims 3, 41 and 42 Under 35 U.S.C §112

Claims 3, 41 and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 3, 4, and 42 have been amended to remove the claim language that provides the basis for this rejection. For at least this reason, this rejection should be withdrawn.

IV. Rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-14, 18, 20-24, 32-35, 38, 39, and 40-42 Under 35 U.S.C §103(a)

Claims 1-4, 6-14, 18, 20-24, 32-35, 38, 39, and 40-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang *et al.* (U.S. 6,636,849) in further view of Shanahan *et al.* (U.S. Appln. 2003/0033288) and Beeferman *et al.* (U.S. 6,701, 309). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reason. Independent claim 1 (from which claims 2-4, 6-13, 14, 18, 20-24 depend), independent claim 32 (from which claims 34 and 35 dependent), and independent claim 38 (from which claims 41 and 42 depend) have been amended herein to incorporate limitations deemed allowable by the examiner. In addition, claims 13, 33, 39 and 40 have been cancelled herein. Therefore, this rejection is moot and the subject claims should be allowed.

V. Rejection of Claim 5 Under 35 U.S.C §103(a)

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang *et al.* and Beeferman *et al.* in further view of de Hita *et al.* (U.S. 6,081,774). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Claim 5 depends from independent claim 1. As discussed *supra*, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate limitations from claim 17, which were deemed allowable. Accordingly, it is believed that this rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

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VI. Rejection of Claim 15 Under 35 U.S.C §103(a)

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang *et al.* and Beeferman *et al.* in further view of Hitachi (Derwent). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Claim 15 depends from independent claim 1, which has been amended herein to incorporate allowable limitations. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

VII. Rejection of Claim 16 Under 35 U.S.C §103(a)

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang *et al.*, Beeferman *et al.* and Hitachi, in further view of Herz *et al.* (U.S. 5,754,939). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Claim 16 depends from independent claim 1. As discussed *supra*, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate allowable subject matter. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

VIII. Rejection of Claims 19, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 36 Under 35 U.S.C §103(a)

Claims 19, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang *et al.*, and Beeferman *et al.* in further view of Srihari *et al.* (ACM). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Independent claims 1 and 32 (from which the subject claims depend) have been amended herein to incorporate limitations from dependent claims deemed allowable. Accordingly, it is believed that this rejection is moot with respect to these amended independent claims. Therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn and the subject claims allowed.

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CONCLUSION

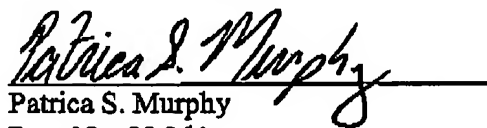
The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP585US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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